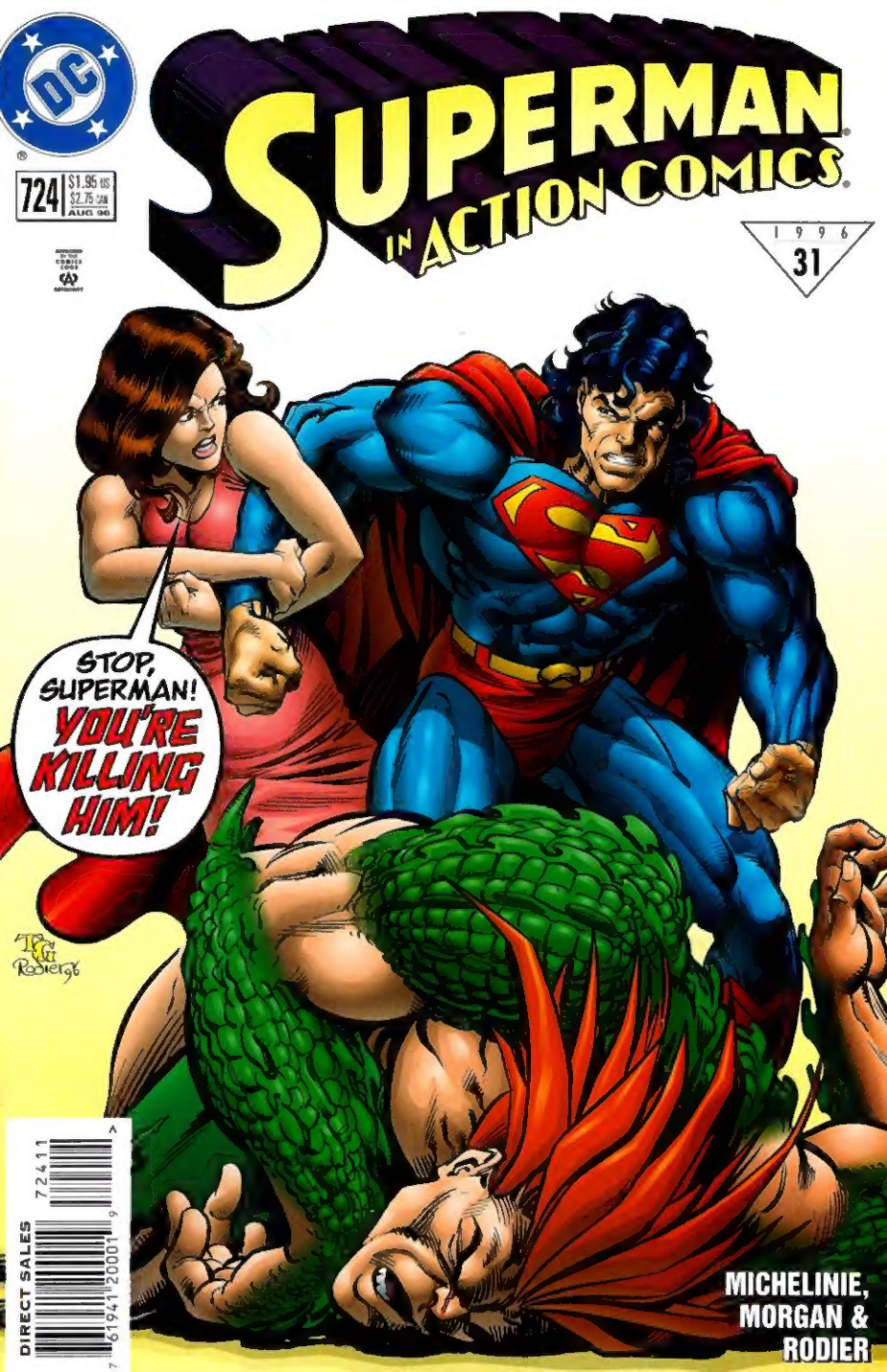
DC
SUPERMAN
IN ACTION COMICS
724
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1996
31
STOP, SUPERMAN! YOU'RE KILLING HIM!
MICHELINIE, MORGAN & RODIER
DIRECT SALES

IN METROPOLIS--
--THERE ARE CREATURES ON THE LOOSE!
LEXCORP BU
THAT'S CORRECT, SUPERMAN, I'M BURTON THOMPSON.
I CAPTURED MOST OF THE MONSTERS WHO'VE ESCAPED FROM S.T.A.R. LABS, AND I'M HERE TO HELP NEUTRALIZE THE SITUATION.
→IN ADVENTURES #537.
YOU CAN START BY DROPPING YOUR WEAPONS, MISTER!
S.C.U
WHA--? DO YOU KNOW WHO I AM?
MATTER OF FACT, NO. AND SINCE I DON'T SEE A BADGE--!
THE WEAPONS--NOW!
SAWYER
LORD, THE ETERNAL AGGRAVATION OF SMALL MINDS IN AUTHORITY...!
HEY, IT'S SUPERMAN!

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TALK ABOUT BEING IN THE RIGHT PLACE AT THE RIGHT TIME!

YOU GETTING THIS, ANGIE?

HMM?

JIMMY!

W-WHAT'D I DO?! FIRST LUCY DECKS ME, & A-AND NOW THIS?

* AGAIN, ADVENTURES #537.

MAN, I-IS EVERYBODY GONNA SOCK ME TODAY?

NOT...

...EXACTLY!

LOOK OUT!

LOSING BRAWL!

DAVID MICHELINIE . WRITER
TOM MORGAN . GUEST PENCILLER
DENIG RODIER . INKER
BILL OAKLEY . LETTERER
GLENN WHITMORE . COLORIST
DIGITAL CHAMELEON . COLOR SEPARATIONS
MIKE McAVENNIE . ASSOCIATE EDITOR
KC CARLSON . EDITOR

SUPERMAN created by JERRY SIEGEL & JOE SHUSTER

ANOTHER S.T.A.R. RUNAWAY! SPIKE-COVERED HIDE CAN'T HURT ME--
--BUT HUMAN BYSTANDERS COULD BE SHREDDED!
CAN'T RISK EVEN INCIDENTAL CONTACT! HAVE TO IMMOBILIZE THIS MONSTER--
--FAST!
SHHTUNK!
SPIKES EMBEDDED DEEP IN THE PAVEMENT. THAT SHOULD HOLD THE BEAST UNTIL--

--HELP ARRIVES!
S.T.A.R.
OUR RETRIEVAL SQUADS ARE EQUIPPED TO HANDLE THE ESCAPEES, SUPERMAN, BUT WE'VE GOT TO CATCH THEM FIRST!
FORTUNATELY, MOST HAVEN'T SPREAD FAR, AND THE SPECIAL CRIMES UNIT IS FACILITATING CONTAINMENT.
BUT ONE, A MINDLESS BRUTE CALLED "BRAWL," SEEMS TO BE TARGETING THE SOUTHWESTERN SUBURBS.
S.T.A.R.
I BELIEVE YOU DEALT WITH HIM BEFORE?
YES, I D.D.
SUBURBAN COPS AREN'T S.C.U., AREN'T PREPARED TO COPE WITH THIS KIND OF THREAT. COULD YOU...?
OF COURSE.
THOUGH CONSIDERING THE TOUGH TIME I HAD WITH BRAWL IN OUR FIRST ENCOUNTER--*
--I JUST HOPE I'M PREPARED TO COPE WITH HIM!
*IN MAN OF STEEL #53.

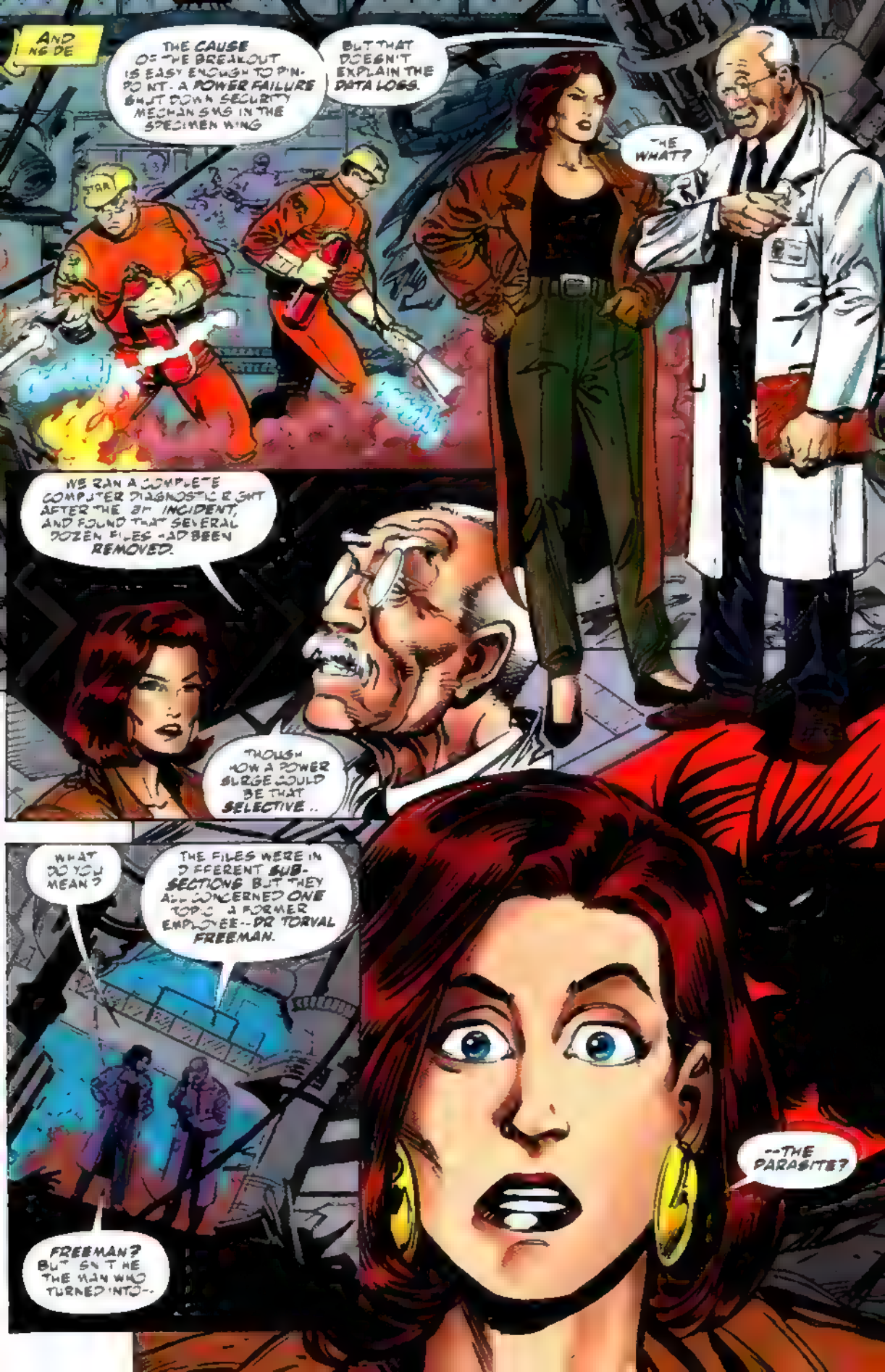
BRIDWELL HEIGHTS, SOUTHWEST OF METROPOLIS...
RIM IT, EDDIE!
YO PROBLEMO!
I WARNED YOU KIDS 'BOUT SKATIN' ON MUNICIPAL PROPERTY! WHADDAYA THINK THIS IS, A--
BRRAWWLL!
WH-WHAT THE--?!
G-GET AWAY! L--LEMME ALONE--!
BDAM! BDAM!
WOOSHH
EASY, OFFICER. I'VE GOT THINGS UNDER CONTRO--

BRRAHHL!
SKRASH!
WHRR WHRR
STILL LETTING... MY BREAKUP WITH LOIS... SPLIT MY CONCENTRATION!
SH-SHOULD'VE SEEN THAT... COMING!
THEN AGAIN, BRAWL'S NOT BEHAVING LIKE BEFORE. HE WAS UNRELENTING THEN, LIKE DOOMSDAY.
HE NEVER WOULD HAVE JUST LEFT ME HERE!
HE HAD NO INTEREST IN GETTING AWAY, OR IN ANYTHING OTHER THAN DESTROYING ME!
SO WHY IS HE BEHAVING DIFFERENTLY NOW?

NEVER MIND! HIS MOTIVATIONS AND GOALS MAY HAVE CHANGED, BUT HIS RAW POWER IS JUST AS DANGEROUS! HAVE TO STOP HIM IN HIS TRACKS!
LITERALLY!
BWA-BA-M!
WHRRRT WH-WHRR
"LEX?
"LEX?"

BE WITH YOU IN A MOMENT, DARLING!
SOMEWHERE IN THE ISOLATED VASTNESS OF THE PACIFIC.
I'M JUST ACCESSING THE UPLINK TO CHECK ON SOME INVESTMENTS.
THERE SEEM TO BE NEW DEVELOPMENTS THAT COULD PROVE QUITE... INTERESTING.
I'D HOPED YOU'D FIND YOUR BRIDE MORE INTERESTING, LEX. OR HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THIS IS OUR HONEYMOON?
HARDLY.
BUT YOU'RE RIGHT, OF COURSE. ONE MUST OBSERVE PROPRIETY ... AND RECOGNIZE PRIORITIES.
VERY WELL, MY DEAREST ERICA...
...I'M ALL YOURS.

S.T.A.R. LABS, METROPOLIS.
SORRY, LADY. THE MEDIA AIN'T ALLOWED ON SITE 'TIL FURTHER NOTICE.
STAR
DO NOT
SWELL.
TIME TO GET CREATIVE...!
IF THAT GUARD HAD LOOKED CLOSER, HE'D HAVE SEEN MY "IDENTIFICATION" CARD WAS FOR THE DAILY PLANET'S GROUP PLAN!
MOMENTS LATER, AT A DIFFERENT CHECK POINT...
I'M LANE, METRO-SHIELD INSURANCE, DAMAGE ASSESSMENT OFFICE.
RIGHT THROUGH THERE, MA'AM.
WHERE'S THE MESS?
DO NOT
LOIS, M'GAL. IT'S ALL IN THE ATTITUDE!


AND INSIDE
THE CAUSE OF THE BREAKOUT IS EASY ENOUGH TO PINPOINT. A POWER FAILURE SHUT DOWN SECURITY MECHANISMS IN THE SPECIMEN WING
BUT THAT DOESN'T EXPLAIN THE DATA LOSS.
STAR
-THE WHAT?
WE RAN A COMPLETE COMPUTER DIAGNOSTIC EIGHT AFTER THE 3M INCIDENT, AND FOUND THAT SEVERAL DOZEN FILES HAD BEEN REMOVED.
THOUGH HOW A POWER SURGE COULD BE THAT SELECTIVE..
WHAT DO YOU MEAN?
THE FILES WERE IN DIFFERENT SUB-SECTIONS BUT THEY ALL CONCERNED ONE TOPIC: A FORMER EMPLOYEE--DR TORVAL FREEMAN.
FREEMAN? BUT ISN'T THE THE MAN WHO TURNED INTO--
--THE PARASITE?

BRIDWELL HEIGHTS
KREEESH!
BRRAHHL
BRR--
--B...
. B-- ?
B. B...B...
WHAMB!
...BRRRAAWWLLL!!

THE FLOWER BOX
AND JUST WHAT THE DEVIL WAS THAT ABOUT?.
FIRST TIME I'VE SEEN BRAWL HESITATE LIKE HIS MIND WAS SOMEWHERE ELSE!
BUT I COULD ALSO BE THE LAST--
--IF I CAN TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THE DISTRACTION--
SHKAK
STREET GANG SHOULD HOLD HIM, AS LONG AS HE STAYS GROGGY.
AND THAT'LL GIVE ME TIME TO CHECK ON THINGS IN THE CITY
--TO PUT THIS RAMPAGING BERSERKER DOWN!
CHUP!

" IT'S STILL A BATTLEFIELD, BUT THE S.C.U. SEEMS TO BE HOLDING ITS OWN. BETTER CHECK STAR WHILE I'M AT IT.. "
LOIS!
AND SHE DOESN'T SEE THAT THING CREEPING UP BEHIND HER
BRAWL'S START'G TO GET B... I'LL HAVE TO RSK LEAVING HIM.
SORRY MY PETS THEY APPEAR TO BE DEFECTIVE.
I MEAN THE VIEW I GET THROUGH THEM RATHER DISAPPOINTING.
OH, LEAVE THOSE SILLY GLASSES ALONE, LEX. WHY DO YOU KEEP FIDGETING WITH THEM?

THAT SOUND!
THE PARASITE--?
NO
NOT 'SITE
THOUGH SOON YOU WISH--
--WAS!
WHEN LOIS BROKE OUR ENGAGEMENT, SHE SAID SHE NEEDED TO REESTABLISH HER INDEPENDENCE--
--NEEDED TO TAKE CARE OF HERSELF!
I WANT TO HONOR THAT. RESPECT IT.
BUT HOW CAN I NOT STEP IN?
OTHERS RAN
I STAYED.
FEED WELL HERE
AND YOU LOOK--
--DELICIOUS!
FIRE
FIRE

THAT DOES IT. I BROKE LOIS'S LIFE WHEN THE JOKER POISONED HER, AND I'VE BEEN HAUNTED BY THAT DECISION EVER SINCE!
THERE'S NO WAY I'LL LET HER DIE!
HOWEVER
PSSHH!!
KA-
WHAK
HUNGRY?
EAT THIS!
SLEEPING THROUGH DESSERT?
HOW RUDE!
GUESS I'VE GOTTEN SO USED TO SAVING LOIS--
--THAT I'D FORGOTTEN HOW WELL SHE CAN HANDLE HERSELF!
GOOD FOR YOU SWEETHEART

BRRAWLL!
BRRAW--
--AWRR...
...RR...?
ROSES...?
BRRRAWWLL!
CHA-KA-GANGK!
I WAS AFRAID OF THIS. BRAM-S BROKEN LOOSE, SMASHING THROUGH BUILDINGS VEHICLES, ANYTHING IN HIS WAY!
NOW HE'S HEADED STRAIGHT FOR THAT HOUSE AT THE END OF THE CUL-DE-SAC! ANOTHER OBSTACLE...
OR SOME MYSTERIOUS GOAL?

EITHER WAY I CAN'T SEE HIS REACHING IT!
WHNGF
STILL MOVING! TAKING ME WITH HIM! WHAT THE BLAZES~
BRRRAWWL!
"--IS IN THAT HOUSE?"
THAT CRASHING! WH-WHAT'S GOING ON OUT--
EEEE!
RRRRRR.
..ROSEBUD!
HE'S TALKING?!
NO! IT-- IT CAN'T BE!
BILL?!?
OKAY THAT'S T-- NOW I'VE HEARD EVERYTHING!

YES! B-BILL... REMEMBERS!
BILL KNOWS ...WHO DID THIS...
IT...IT WAS--
:sigh:
PLIP!
TZZZSSSSSSS
WHAT THE--?!
AAAGHH!!
SUPER-HEARING'S NOT PICKING UP A HEARTBEAT. VITAL FUNCTIONS HAVE CEASED. HE'S--
--DEAD!

S.T.A.R.
POLICE
8
12
EMS
MISS, DID YOU RECOGNIZE THAT... PERSON?
I THINK... I--I MEAN, IT COULDN'T--I DON'T KNOW!
I WAS MARRIED TO A MAN NAMED BILL. WE MET IN FILM SCHOOL, AT A SCREENING OF "CITIZEN KANE."
HIS PET NAME FOR ME WAS "ROSEBUD" --Y'KNOW, FROM THE MOVIE?
NOBODY ELSE EVER CALLED ME THAT. NOBODY! BUT...
... BILL DIED. HE HAD AN INOPERABLE BRAIN TUMOR. OUT OF DESPERATION, WE AGREED TO EXPERIMENTAL SURGERY.
BUT HE DIDN'T MAKE IT.
THE FUNERAL WAS A CLOSED CASKET CEREMONY. THEY SAID IT WAS BECAUSE OF THE MASSIVE SCARRING FROM THE OPERATION, BUT--
--IT CAN'T BE! HOW COULD THAT... THAT THING BE MY BILL?!
S.T.A.R.

BRAWL WAS ARTIFICIALLY ALTERED, TURNED INTO A MINDLESS ENGINE OF DESTRUCTION FOR REASONS YET UNKNOWN.
BUT APPARENTLY, WHATEVER RESEARCH BURTON THOMPSON WAS CONDUCTING INITIATED FURTHER CHANGES --ONES THAT WERE RESTORING THE POOR "VOLUNTEER'S" MEMORY!
AND COMBINED MICROSCOPIC AND X-RAY VISION SHOWS ANOTHER IRONY: NO SIGN OF THE TUMOR. WHATEVER THOMPSON DID SEEMS TO HAVE REVERSED THE DISEASE. HAD BRAWL LIVED--
--HE WOULD HAVE BEEN CURED!
BUT HOW CAN I TELL HER THAT... NOW?
I DON'T HAVE ALL THE ANSWERS, MISS. BUT SOME DAY, SOMEHOW, I'LL GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS--AND JUSTICE WILL BE SERVED.
"THAT'S A PROMISE."

OOOO, WHAT A SOUR LOOK.
BAD WINE, DARLING?
ACTUALLY, I WAS THINKING ABOUT THOSE INVESTMENTS.
IT SEEMS I'VE SUFFERED A SMALL LOSS. BUT I SUPPOSE THAT'S TO BE EXPECTED.
BY LEARNING FROM THE EXPERIENCE, I'LL BE BETTER PREPARED NEXT TIME--
--TO MAKE A KILLING!
SUBJECT TERMINATED
MEANWHILE, THERE ARE STILL MONSTERS ON THE PROWL IN METROPOLIS! DON'T MISS MAN OF STEEL #59 FOR THE CRITTER-FILLED CONCLUSION!